blacknewsdigest

NEWS
from the
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of Information,
Publications and Reports
Washington, D.C.
20210

WEEK OF MAY 12, 1975

IN THIS ISSUE:

BLACK WOMEN'S BUREAU WORKER
ADOPTS VIETNAM BABY

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
REMAINS HIGH IN APRIL

INCOME LEVELS DEFINING POOR FAMILIES RAISED

15,500 OLDER WORKERS AIDED
BY TWO LABOR DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS

JOB SAFETY RULES TO REQUIRE ROLLOVER
STRUCTURES ON NEW FARM TRACTORS

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, HEALTH HAZARDS
GROWING PROBLEM FOR WOMEN WORKERS

NEW MOVES TO STRENGTHEN SAFETY,
HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR FEDERAL WORKERS

PUBLICATIONS ON PUBLIC SECTOR LABOR RELATIONS

VIRGINIA KNAUER'S 'DEAR CONSUMER' COLUMN

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

International Women's Year — Equality - Development - Peace

The Local Angle:

REGIONAL INFORMATION OFFICES

The U.S. Department of Labor operates through 10 regional offices located in major cities across the country. If you want a local angle on a news or feature story provided through this service--or have a direct news inquiry--you may contact one of the offices listed below. This listing includes the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Assistant Regional Directors for Information and the states in their regions:

Region I	Paul F. Neal Room E-308 JFK Federal Bldg. Boston, Mass. 02203 617-223-6767	Connecticut Maine Massachusetts New Hampshire Rhode Island Vermont
Region II	Edward I. Weintraub Room 3510 1515 Broadway New York, N.Y. 10036 212-971-5477	New Jersey New York Puerto Rico Virgin Islands
Region III	John P. Hord 14280 Gateway Bldg. 3535 Market St. Philadelphia, Pa. 19104 215-597-1139	Delaware District of Columbia Maryland Pennsylvania Virginia West Virginia
Region IV	William I. Allgood Room 317 1371 Peachtree St., N.E. Atlanta, Ga. 30309 404-526-5495	Alabama Florida Georgia Mississippi North Carolina South Carolina Tennessee Kentucky
Region V	John D. Mellott Room 737 230 S. Dearborn St. Chicago, Ill. 60606 312-353-6976	Illinois Indiana Michigan Minnesota Ohio Wisconsin
Region VI	Les Gaddie 555 Griffin Sq. Bldg., Rm. 220 Griffin and Youngs Sts. Dallas, Texas 75202 214-749-2308	Arkansas Louisiana New Mexico Oklahoma Texas
Region VII	Neal A. Johnson Federal Office Bldg. Room 1904 911 Walnut St. Kansas City, Mo. 64106 816-374-5481	Iowa Kansas Missouri Nebraska
Region VIII	Ernest E. Sanchez Room 17010 Federal Bldg. 1961 Stout St. Denver, Co. 80202 303-837-4234	Colorado Montana North Dakota South Dakota Utah Wyoming
Region IX	Tor Torland Room 10007 Federal Bldg. 450 Golden Gate Ave. San Francisco, Calif. 94102 415-556-3423	Arizona California Hawaii Nevada
Region X	Ernest Hood Federal Office Bldg.,Rm. 7018 909 First Ave. Seattle, Washington 98174 206-442-7620	Alaska Idaho Oregon Washington

BLACK WOMEN'S BUREAU WORKER
ADOPTS VIETNAM BABY

WASHINGTON -- For nearly 10 years, Virginia Clark, a social science advisor in the Women's Bureau, has thought about adopting a war orphan.

Early last month, her dreams came true. Virginia Clark, single, black resident of Silver Spring, Md., became the adoptive mother of 18-month-old Tiffany Clark, who had, only hours before, been Nguyen Ngoc Han of Saigon, Indo-China.

A foster child herself, Virginia Clark was raised in Philadelphia with two foster "siblings," a boy and a girl. The three children were not blood relatives, but were brought up by their foster parents as a cohesive and loving family.

Virginia says that her foster mother impressed upon the children that when they grew up they should make a home for some other homeless child.

So Virginia not only vowed to adopt a child, but set her sights on a war orphan.

She was hoping for a little girl about three or four years old. Her thinking was that the biggest demand was for infants, and she didn't mind taking an older child; as a matter of fact, she'd at one time taught nursery school and felt qualified to cope with a pre-schooler.

But when the agency called to ask whether she'd like to have Tiffany instead, she jumped at the chance. "It wasn't until afterward," she said, "that it occurred to me that I'd bought a child's bed instead of a crib and that she wasn't old enough for nursery school."

However, during the month's leave of absence the adoption agency required for mother and baby to get to know each other, Virginia solved those problems. The baby learned to sleep in the junior bed, and Virginia found a retired social worker in her apartment house who will care for Tiffany until she's old enough to go to nursery school. She's hoping that her toddler will be able to enter the Labor Department nursery school in September, after she gets two candles on her birthday cake. Arrangements were begun long before Tiffany's arrival here.

(MORE)

AlthougH Tiffany came to Ms. Clark from an orphanage, her mother doesn't think she spent much time there. "She's so delightful and flirtatious," she says, "it's obvious that she's had loving care."

Doing her bit for the disadvantaged is nothi..g new for Virginia Clark. She served in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia from 1963-65, devoting her energies to helping others find their way out of poverty.

Now working for her Ph.D. in history, she expects to sandwich work, study, and motherhood into her busy day. "When I was teaching nursery school, I saw hundreds of mothers in circumstances more difficult than mine successfully combine work with family life," she says. "If they could do it, so can I."

The Labor Department is proud to count among its dedicated employees Virginia Clark, loving mother to a Vietnam war orphan.

# # #

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
REMAINS HIGH IN APRIL

WASHINGTON -- The unemployment rate for blacks rose to 14.6 percent in April, the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported. The unemployment rate for blacks was 14.2 percent in March.

The unemployment rate for whites in April was reported at 8.1 percent.

Nationally, unemployment continued to increase in April, but total employment rose slightly.

The unemployment rate moved up to 8.9 percent from 8.7 percent in March. This was the highest rate since 1941 and nearly double the rate of October 1973, the pre-recession low.

Total employment (as measured by the monthly survey of households) rose by 240,000 in April to 84.1 million. This represented the first employment gain in 7 months; between last September and March, employment had receded by 2.6 million. With employment and unemployment both rising, the labor force posted a strong advance for the second month in a row, and the rate of labor force participation actually exceeded the year-earlier figure.

Total nonagricultural payroll employment (as measured by the monthly survey of establishments) held steady in April at 76.3 million, as a continued drop in manufacturing jobs was countered by small gains in the services sector. Since last October's peak level, payroll jobs have diminshed by 2.6 million, with all but 200,000 of the reduction occurring in the goods-producing industries.

Unemployment rose by 200,000 in April to 8.2 million, seasonally adjusted, following an increase of 500,000 in the previous month. Since August 1974, when the extraordinarily large increases in unemployment began, the jobless count has risen by 3.3 million persons. As has been the case throughout this recession, the April increase in unemployment stemmed primarily from job loss. Since August, the number of job losers has risen by 2.7 million, accounting for more than four-fifths of the total increase. Job loss now accounts for 57 percent of total joblessness, compared with only 41 percent last August.

(MORE)

Most of the April increase in unemployment occurred among adult men. Their jobless rate was 7.0 percent, up from 6.8 percent in March and at its highest level since July 1958. This rise was also reflected in unemployment rate increases for married men and household heads to 5.6 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively. Both the level and rate of unemployment for each of these three worker groups have doubled over the past year.

The unemployment rate for adult women (8.6 percent) and teenagers (20.4 percent) were about unchanged in April, but remained at or near record high levels.

Increases in joblessness were concentrated in the construction, manufacturing, and transportation and public utilities industries and among the blue-collar occupational grouping. Jobless rates of 19.3 percent in construction and 12.2 percent in manufacturing were alltime recorded highs.

The unemployment rate of workers covered by state unemployment insurance programs reached 6.8 percent in April, still somewhat below post-World War II record levels. The number of workers claiming state unemployment insurance benefits, at 4.5 million, represented 55 percent of the jobless total, compared with 47 percent a year earlier.

The unemployment rate for Vietnam-era veterans aged 20-34 years rose from 9.0 percent in March to 9.9 percent in April but was not materially different from the jobless rate of nonveterans of the same ages (10.4 percent). The rate for young veterans (20-24 years) soared to 22.8 percent in April; they continued to be the only group to have a substantially higher jobless rate than their nonveteran counterparts.

The number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 15 weeks or longer) rose by 410,000 to a level of 2.4 million in April.

(MORE)

Total employment rose by 240,000 in April to 84.1 million, seasonally adjusted. This increase followed six consecutive monthly employment declines that totaled 2.6 million. Adult males, who have experienced the greatest number of job losses during this recession, accounted for more than half of the April employment gain.

The civilian labor force rose for the second straight month, increasing by 430,000 to 92.3 million. All of the increase took place among adult workers. Over the past year, the civilian labor force has risen by 1.9 million, with adult women accounting for more than 1.1 million of the rise and adult men the balance.

The civilian labor force participation rate--the proportion of the civilian population either working or looking for work--rose to 61.2 percent in April, up from 61.0 percent in both the previous month and April a year ago.

Total nonagricultural payroll employment, at 76.3 million seasonally adjusted, was about unchanged from March, following 5 straight months of sharp declines.

Declines in manufacturing, which have played a dominant role in the economic downturn, continued in April but at a slower pace.

The deteriorating job situation in contract construction appeared to be abating, as employment in the industry held about steady in April at close to 3.5 million.

Partially offsetting the manufacturing declines were small gains in several of the service-producing industries.

The average workweek for all production or nonsupervisory workers on nonfarm payrolls edged up in April to 36.0 hours, seasonally adjusted.

Average hourly earnings of production or nonsupervisory workers on nonfarm payrolls edged up 0.2 percent in April, seasonally adjusted. Since April of last year, hourly earnings have advanced by 8.3 percent. Average weekly earnings rose at a rate of 0.5 percent over the month and 6.5 percent over the year.

(MORE)

Before adjustment for seasonality, hourly earnings rose 1 cent in April to $4.44. Since April 1974, hourly earnings were up 34 cents. Average weekly earnings rose 36 cents from March and $9.68 from April a year ago.

The Hourly Earnings Index--earnings adjusted for overtime in manufacturing, seasonality, and the effects of changes in the proportion of workers in high-wage and low-wage industries--was 168.8 (1967=100) in April, unchanged from March. The index was 9.4 percent above April a year ago. During the 12-month period ended in March, the Hourly Earnings Index in dollars of constant purchasing power declined 0.4 percent.

###

Week of May 12, 1975

INCOME LEVELS DEFINING POOR FAMILIES RAISED

WASHINGTON -- The level of family income used to determine whether or not a person is poor has been raised by the U. S. Department of Labor for its manpower programs to reflect increases in consumer prices over the past year.

The revised poverty-level guidelines for metropolitan area and farm families became effective April 30, 1975.

They will be applied by federal, state, and local administrators of manpower programs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) which provides job and training opportunities for persons who are classified as economically disadvantaged, unemployed, or underemployed.

Income levels for families of one through six persons are shown below for the Continental U. S., Hawaii, and Alaska, with the table for 1974-1975 included for comparison

	April 30, 1975						May 1974	
Family Size	Continental U.S. Nonfarm	Farm	Hawaii Nonfarm	Farm	Alaska Nonfarm	Farm	Continental U. S. Nonfarm	Farm
1	$2,590	$2,200	$2,990	$2,540	$3,250	$2,750	$2,330	$1,980
2	3,410	2,900	3,930	3,340	4,270	3,620	3,070	2,610
3	4,230	3,600	4,870	4,140	5,290	4,490	3,810	3,240
4	5,050	4,300	5,810	4,940	6,310	5,360	4,550	3,870
5	5,870	5,000	6,750	5,740	7,330	6,230	5,290	4,500
6	6,690	5,700	7,690	6,540	8,350	7,100	6,030	5,130

The new income levels are $500 higher for an urban family of four and $660 higher for a family of six, reflecting the cost of living increase since the last criteria were set in May 1974.

Income limits for families of more than six persons may be determined by adding for the nonfarm and farm levels these amounts for each additional person: $820 and $700 for the Continental U.S., $940 and $800 for Hawaii, and $1,020 and $870 for Alaska.

The Labor Department's Manpower Administration defines an economically disadvantaged person as one who is a member of a family who receives cash welfare payments, or whose annual income in relation to family size does not exceed the poverty level criteria.

Underemployed is defined as an individual who is working part-time but seeking a full-time job or an individual working full-time but earning wages below the poverty criteria.

The poverty level guidelines are issued annually by the Manpower Administration.

# # #

Week of May 12, 1975

15,500 OLDER WORKERS AIDED
BY TWO LABOR DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON -- More than 15,500 economically disadvantaged persons 55 years and over worked in part-time community service jobs in the last six months of 1974 under two Labor Department funded programs, Secretary of Labor John T. Dunlop has reported.

In the period July - December 1974, there were:

-- 12,320 individuals employed under the National Older Workers Program -- Operation Mainstream -- with a federal outlay of $13,863,000, and

-- 3,284 individuals employed under the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) with an outlay of $2,232,000.

The two programs, Dr. Dunlop said, generally met or exceeded the hiring goals set for them last year.

Blacks accounted for 21 percent of the more than 12,000 who were still employed under both programs at the end of 1974. Other characteristics reveal that: 71 percent were white, 53 percent were men, 56 percent were 65 years of age or older, and 52 percent had no more than eight years of schooling.

These two programs provide part-time jobs for elderly poor persons. Participants work in a wide variety of community service jobs at day care centers, senior citizen centers, nutrition programs for the elderly, home-health care projects, hospitals, schools, and beautification, conservation and restoration projects, many of the latter in national forests.

In addition to providing part-time job opportunities, local projects also provide personal services for the participants such as yearly physical examinations, personal and job-related counseling, consumer information, job training, and referral and placement into unsubsidized jobs.

Activity under both programs is sponsored primarily by a group of five national organizations. Most have participated in Operation Mainstream since 1968 and were also involved in the start-up of SCSEP which began in June 1974.

-11-(MORE)

They are: Green Thumb, Inc., (an arm of the National Farmers Union), the National Council on the Aging, the National Council of Senior Citizens, the National Retired Teachers Association--American Association of Retired Persons, the U. S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

Participants' wages average about $2.25 an hour, and are subsidized by Labor Department funds.

The Operation Mainstream program is funded by Title III of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act; the Senior Community Service Employment Program under Title IX of the Older Americans Comprehensive Services Amendments of 1973.

# # #

-12-

Week of May 12, 1975

JOB SAFETY RULES TO REQUIRE ROLLOVER
STRUCTURES ON NEW FARM TRACTORS

WASHINGTON -- Job safety rules announced by the U. S. Department of Labor will require rollover protective structures on new agricultural tractors purchased after Oct. 24, 1976, and used by employees.

Rollover structures, which may be a frame or a frame and enclosure, are designed to protect farm workers from injury if a tractor overturns.

The rules will apply only to tractors used by employees--not to those used by farm employers or members of their immediate family.

"Low profile" tractors used in hop yards, vineyards, tree fruit farms, farm buildings and greenhouses, are generally excepted from the rollover protective structure provisions of the rules.

Assistant Secretary of Labor John H. Stender, head of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), said OSHA had changed its original proposal for a Sept. 1, 1974 effective date to give manufacturers sufficient lead time to produce needed quantities of the new protective structures.

Stender said the National Safety Council reports that a 1969-1972 survey of 10 states with nearly one-third of the nation's farm workers showed that on-the-farm deaths due to overturns occurred at a rate of 8.6 per 100,000 tractors. Another survey, conducted by the Department of Transportation through 1969, shows rollover tractor accidents cause some 540 fatalities annually.

Stender said the requirement for a rollover protective structure will apply to all agricultural tractors of more than 20 engine horsepower and the various type structures would have to meet specified structural strengths based on prescribed test procedures.

These procedures are essentially adaptations of standards developed by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers and the Society of Automotive Engineers.

(MORE)

In addition to the rollover protective structures, seatbelts also are mandated in new tractors.

"Low profile" tractors also are defined in the rules to provide a common basis for application of the exemption.

Notice of the new standards appeared in the Federal Register April 25.

# # #

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, HEALTH HAZARDS
GROWING PROBLEM FOR WOMEN WORKERS

WASHINGTON -- Occupational safety and health hazards are a growing problem for women workers, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Department says:

-- There has not been enough research on the occupational safety and health problems facing women.

-- This presents a growing problem because more and more women are moving into new kinds of jobs under protection of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other laws.

-- An important question is how to assure women safe and healthful conditions at work, while continuing to protect them from job discrimination.

These are some of the points made in an article, "Women Workers: Are They Special?" in the April issue of the Labor Department's Job Safety & Health magazine.

The article, written by the publication's associate editor, Phyllis Lehmann, quotes several experts, among them Dr. David Wegman of the Harvard School of Public Health.

Because of the lack of enough information, he suggests, many common beliefs about women workers--that they are too weak to do heavy work, that they cannot tolerate temperature extremes as well as men, and that they are more susceptible to toxic substances--can only be considered well-cultivated myths.

The magazine quotes Dr. Wegman as urging employers to set criteria on work strength and endurance for specific jobs and then to hire individuals to meet these criteria, regardless of sex.

Pregnant women present special problems. But most authorities agree that working during pregnancy rarely creates complications, although common sense precautions are necessary, according to the publication.

As for the degree of risk to the unborn child of a mother who works, we still do not have the answers, Job Safety & Health says, quoting another expert.

(MORE)

There are many occupational hazards connected with some so-called "women's jobs," and in some cases women in such jobs face greater hazards than men doing different jobs in the same establishments.

For example, Job Safety & Health says a survey in the District of Columbia showed that in laundries men usually ran the washing machines and women the pressers, which produced greater heat stress.

Even airline flight attendants, most of them women, have special occupational health problems, including severe leg and back pains for some of them who fly on DC-10's. Job Safety & Health says these planes fly with nose slightly above tail, and the attendants are "constantly walking uphill or downhill."

As for nurses, a recent study indicates they are prone to blood clots in their legs because they are on their feet a lot, and another study showed they suffer more miscarriages and have more defective offspring when exposed to anesthetic gases in operating rooms.

A study of beauticians and cosmetology students in Utah by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health showed a high incidence of lung problems caused by inhaling hair spray.

As women move into jobs formerly held exclusively by men, they are being exposed to the hazards of those jobs, too, the magazine points out.

"They, too, must contend with asbestos, silica, carbon monoxide, lead, and other common health hazards--as well as with new chemicals about which even less is known," the publication says.

The magazine quotes two unionists, John Zalusky, research director of the Allied Industrial Workers, and Juanita Mims, a member of the United Furniture Workers and an organizer of the Coalition of Labor Union Women in Baltimore, on hazards facing women in their respective industries.

It adds:

"Taking action on women's occupational hazards within the boundaries of the law represents a dilemma for labor, industry, and the government agencies responsible for setting workplace standards."

# # #

NEW MOVES TO STRENGTHEN SAFETY,
HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR FEDERAL WORKERS

WASHINGTON -- Assistant Secretary of Labor John H. Stender, who heads the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), has reported that new developments will aid in strengthening on-the-job protection offered federal workers by provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

Stender, in an editorial in the May issue of "Job Safety & Health," OSHA's official monthly magazine, said one new measure is an Office of Management and Budget directive, expected to be issued soon.

That directive will require each federal agency to itemize job safety and health expenditures in its annual budget submissions.

Additionally, the Civil Service Commission, in response to the recently published OSHA rule for federal employees' safety and health programs, is reviewing the Federal Personnel Manual to determine what, if any, changes are necessary to require that supervisors also be rated on how well they carry out their occupational safety and health responsibilities.

Stender commented that the new measures "will accelerate the pace of the federal government's move toward a job safety and health program that will meet the President's challenge of setting the example for the private sector."

# # #

PUBLICATIONS ON PUBLIC SECTOR LABOR RELATIONS

WASHINGTON -- Assistant Secretary of Labor Paul J. Fasser Jr. has announced three publications dealing with public sector labor relations are available.

The publications, issued by the Labor Department's Labor-Management Services Administration, are:

(1) Summary of State Policy Regulations for Public Sector Labor Relations: Statutes, Attorney General Opinions and Selected Court Decisions

(2) Understanding Fact Finding and Arbitration in the Public Sector, and

(3) Understanding Grievance Arbitration in the Public Sector.

The Summary was first issued in November 1971 to provide assistance to the growing number of states with collective bargaining law and in-depth study concerning possible federal involvement in public sector labor relations. This 1975 revised edition gives greater detail to the 1971 material and includes statutes and case citations.

For single copies and further information contact: U. S. Department of Labor, Labor-Management Services Administration, Office of Labor-Management Relations Services, Division of Public Employee Labor Relations, Room N-5708, Washington, D. C. 20216.

# # #

How Can People Help People?

By Virginia Knauer

Special Assistant to the President
and Director
Office of Consumer Affairs
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

Has it been happening in your community—some special effort to lend a hand to people needing financial help?

Recently, I have run across some heart-warming situations involving this kind of help. I am eager to learn of more such efforts so I can spread the word.

Here are several examples of what I mean:

• Fuel Merchants Association of New Jersey—in cooperation with the State Office on Aging and New Jersey Council of Senior Citizens—has arranged credit for senior citizens who cannot afford to pay cash for fuel. The state agency certifies the older person's need for credit, and the association works out appropriate credit terms.

• Suburban Bank of Norristown, Pa., has helped find jobs for its own unemployed loan customers. The bank started the program after polling its loan customers who were behind in their payments. Almost 75 percent were delinquent because they were unemployed.

• Radio Station WRC in Washington, D.C., is working with government employment agencies to publicize local job openings. Once an hour, 24 hours a day, WRC broadcasts "Job Alert" as a public service. "Job Alert" gives a description of the job vacancy—position, salary and geographic location—and tells how to apply.

Those are programs that I call people-helping-people. Such programs should be publicized because they can then help more people. Other civic or business groups in other communities can adapt the ideas and start their own programs to help the unemployed or underprivileged.

Won't you please send me examples of people-helping-people programs in your community?

I plan to compile a list of these programs and to distribute it to the press and to private and public organizations across the country. My hope is to inspire others to undertake similar programs.

Send your description to People-Helping-People, Office of Consumer Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20201. Include a brief description and give the exact name of the company, volunteer group or government agency that is sponsoring the program.

FILLERS FROM THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

One of the goals of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) is to encourage and develop the employment of disadvantaged, unemployed and underemployed men and women.

# # #

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973 was passed to help disadvantaged, unemployed and underemployed men and women become self-sufficient, contributing participants in our economy.

# # #

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) provides for state and local manpower services, public service employment programs, and national manpower programs, including the Job Corps.

# # #

Title I of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) establishes a program of financial assistance to state and local governments so they can offer comprehensive manpower services in their areas.

# # #

The National Older Worker Program provides work experience and training for adults with poor prospects for employment.

# # #